

**And remind (others), for the reminder most certainly benefits the Believers
Surah Zhaariyaat, verse 55**

GUIDELINES ON I'TIKAAF AND EID DURING THE LOCKDOWN

It must be borne in mind that in spite of the lockdown, I'tikaaf may still be observed in the masajid by menfolk. Let us not allow the lockdown to overwhelm our Deeni sentiments and obligations to the extent that we become spiritual paralyzed. A Muslim is one who remains steadfast in times of ease and times of adversity. Today, thousands of people in countries around the world have acted contrary to lockdown conditions in order to achieve and fulfil their worldly needs, as part of what they believe is their right to freedom of movement. Our Deeni needs are far greater and much more compelling. In fact, by the fulfilment of our Deeni requirements Allah Ta'ala has undertaken to provide our worldly needs as well, and also to ensure protection from harm. **"O Believers! If you will help (the Deen of) Allah, Allah will help you (in this world) and will make you steadfast"** (Surah Muhammed, verse 7)

During the current climate of fear that has been spurned by the coronavirus spread, it is essential that Muslims realize the need to turn to Allah. Turning to Allah is not possible without the fulfilment of His Commandments.

VIRTUES OF I'TIKAAF

It is reported from Hazrat Ali (radhiyallahu anhu) that Rasoolullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam said:

"Whosoever performs an I'tikaaf of ten days in Ramadaan will receive the reward of two Hajj and two Umrah." (Shu'abul Imaan)

Once Hazrat Abdullah bin Abbaas (radhiyallahu anhu), while standing beside the Blessed Resting Place of Rasoolullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam, made the following statement: "I have heard the inmate of this Holy Grave, not so long ago, say:

.....Whoever performs I'tikaaf of one day for the sake of Allah, Allah will create between him and the fire of Jahannam three trenches, each of which will be greater than the distance between east and west." (Shu'abul Imaan)

➤ **THE SUNNAT MUAKKADA I'TIKAAF** is the I'tikaaf of the last ten days of Ramadaan. It is established from authentic ahadeeth that The Holy Prophet of Allah sallallahu alaihi wasallam always observed this I'tikaaf during the month of Ramadaan. This I'tikaaf is **sunnat muakkada alal kifaya**, meaning that if one or two people in a community carry out this act of worship, the rest will be absolved of the responsibility. If no one fulfils this ibadaat, all in the community will be sinful for the neglect of a strong and important Sunnat. Therefore, even if the numbers are limited, each locality should at least have one or two people observing the I'tikaaf in their respective Masaajid.

- If there is no one available to deliver food to the Mu'takifeen (people making I'tikaaf), they are allowed to prepare their own food using the Musjid's kitchen . They will also be allowed to leave the Musjid's boundaries to fetch food and other essentials for themselves. We have prepared a booklet on the rules of I'tikaaf. Send an email to the above address to request a copy.
- **Menfolk may not perform I'tikaaf at home.**

I'TIKAAF FOR WOMEN

Womenfolk can also earn the great reward of I'tikaaf by performing I'tikaaf in their homes. The noble wives of *Rasoolullah sallallahu alaihi wasallam* used to observe the I'tikaaf of Ramadaan after he had passed away. By observing I'tikaaf at home, women will also get the reward of sunnat I'tikaaf.

- It is not permissible for a woman to perform I'tikaaf in the Musjid. For the purpose of I'tikaaf, she should select the room wherein daily salaah is performed, generally called the *namaaz room*. Alternatively, she may choose any room or area within her home for I'tikaaf. Having done this, the place she has selected for I'tikaaf will now have the same ruling as a Musjid for I'tikaaf purposes. The same laws that apply to the Musjid for men will apply for women to the room they choose for I'tikaaf. Further details for female I'tikaaf can be found in our booklet referred to above.

EID SALAAH

Since almost all Masaajid are closed, there is no option but to offer the Eid salaah at home, as most people are doing with Jumu'ah salaah. For Eid salaah, the following rules will apply:

- The minimum number of people for Eid salaah is four adult males, including the Imam. If there are less than four males, Eid salaah may not be offered.
- Ladies in the household may join the Eid salaah performed at home. However, the ladies following the Eid salaah should have mehrams present among the male followers. The Imam should make the intention of Imamat for the females.
- Eid salaah consists of two rakaats with six extra takbeers. The Eid Khutba is delivered after the salaah, not before. There is no azhaan and iqamat for Eid.
- The time of Eid salaah comes in about 15 minutes after Sunrise, and lasts till zawaal. After zawaal, Eid salaah may not be performed.
- **THE METHOD OF THE EID SALAAH**

The niyyat for Eid salaah is: "I am offering two rakaats waajib Eid salaah with six extra takbeers." (The Muqtadi must add: "Behind this Imam"). **Note: Takbeer means to say 'Allahu Akbar' while raising the hands.** Raise the hands and say 'Allahu Akbar'. Fold the hands and recite thana. Thereafter, three takbeers will be uttered. Raise the hands and say "Allahu Akbar", then drop the hands to the side. Say another takbeer and drop the hands to the side. Say takbeer once more (this being the third extra takbeer) and then fold the hands. Read Aoozhu and Bismillah and continue with salaah as normal. Surah Fatiha and a Surah will be recited and the first rakaat will be completed as normal. In the second rakaat Surah

Fatiha and a Surah will be recited as normal. Then, before going into rukoo', three more takbeers will be said one after the other. After each takbeer the hands will be lowered to the sides. The fourth takbeer will be the takbeer for rukoo. The salaah will then be completed as normal.

- Dua may be made after the Eid salaah or after the Khutba.
- After the two Rakaats of Eid salaah, two short khutbas will be recited. During each khutba the following takbeer should be said at least seven times: **Allahu Akbar Allahu Akbar, Laa ilaaha Illallahu Wallahu Akbar; Allahu Akbar Wa Lillahir Hamd.**
- The Eid Khutba is sunnat. If it is left out the Eid salaah will still be valid.
- Khutba should be delivered while standing. It is sinful to sit and read the Khutba. However, there is a pause between the two khutbas; during this pause the Khateeb may sit on a chair if there is no mimbar available.
- If the minimum number of people is not available for Eid salaah, then it will not be permissible to offer Eid salaah. Eid salaah may not be read alone by a single person. In that case, the least is to offer two or four rakaats *salaatud-dhuhaa* individually.

NOTE: If special permission is granted by the Government for Muslims to gather on Eid day, or if the lockdown is lifted before Eid, then it is not permissible to offer Eid salaah in the homes. Then it is waajib for menfolk to attend the Masjid or Eidgah for Eid salaah.

AVOIDING FUTILITY IN RAMADAAN

A hadeeth of Rasoolullah (sallallahu alayhi wasallam) states the following:

“Part of the beauty of a man’s Islam is the shunning of that which is futile.” (Bukhari Shareef)

In other words, to abstain from futile actions beautifies our Islam. Futile actions mean any act or statement that does not provide a recognised worldly benefit, nor any Deeni benefit. The severity of indulging in futile acts can be gauged from an incident in the time of Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم, as narrated by Imam Ghazali (ra). A young Sahaabi was just slain in battle and had become a martyr. People including his mother, were praising this man for his valiant efforts and his martyrdom. After hearing all these praises, Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم remarked: **“How do you know if he had not perpetrated an act of futility in his lifetime, and thus stands to lose all this reward?”** The implication of this Hadeeth is quite serious. It does not mean that this Sahaabi had actually committed such an act. Instead, Rasoolullah صلى الله عليه وسلم used this opportunity to highlight an important issue that people tend to regard as trivial. To communicate the gravity of futile acts, he used the example of a martyr, who in spite of his bravery and valour, faces the dark prospect of losing all this reward just because of one act of futility. Allah alone knows how many acts of futility we commit daily. Ramadaan is not a month that should be spent in listening to sports, watching sports, or even playing it. The nights of Ramadaan are far too precious to be idled away in outdoor nightlife, watching television, listening to mundane radio programs, playing games, surfing the internet, etc. All these are examples of futile activities.

This is a month wherein we revive our concern for the life hereafter. Such revival can only come when we spend our time fruitfully and beneficially in this month.

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